

Yesterday we gave you a general view of the course before us. From what we then said, you will understand, that our little system of lectures is not calculated to make a thorough & minute Naturalist. It ought rather to be considered as an exposition or display of the economy of Nature, visible in the works of creation. It is what Sir J. Keane recommended, Natural Hist. mixed with "reasoning".

Natural Philosophy aims to teach those quiescent forms of nature, and their co-existing qualities w^c all bodies indissimilately possess, as extinction, figure, mobility, dirinity, & vis inertiae; but it leaves to the Natural Historian the task of describing the effluent, active, or living principle in organised bodies.

Were we disposed to criticise we might raise some objections to the term Nat. History, as applied to any natural object presented to our view - (e.g. a mineral) What is commonly called Nat. History divides itself into two branches: the 1st. makes us acquainted with natural objects as they are presented by nature, and furnishes us with easily applicable criteria to distinguish them from each other. This ought ∴ to be called natural Description and not Nat. history. The 2^d. branch consists in the investigation of the ancient & original state of natural objects, and the successive changes

changes of the earth & of its mountains; the progress of vegetation; and the gradual evolutions of the embryos animal. This last branch is properly speaking Natural History.

It was our custom for a series of years to give two or three lectures on the history of philosophy from the days of Pythagoras. [Down to the present ^{time} day]. We shall omit it in our present course, and shall only observe to you, that there has, and always will be two Empires commanding the world. The 1^d. is the Empire of Kings, and rulers of States, with those who act under them, as Generals of armies, ministers & magistrates. The 2^d. is the Empire of learning, or Philosophy. This is a species of eminence, in which distinction arises not from birth, riches, authority, nor from elevation of place, but from superior knowledge alone. This forms a new species of empire or command, infinitely more extensive than all others, and which lasts when Kings, conquerors, and Legislators are returned to their native dust.

So glorious was the modest & simple title of Philosopher to the learned of ancient times, that they preferred it to all others. That love of wisdom, w^c the word implies, and that study of Nature, w^c they all professed, gave them such authority over the minds of men, in that day, that their maxims

maxims were received as oracles in the world: —
— Great men & Governors applied to them for ad-
vice in affairs of the last importance: Cities and
Provinces submitted to their directions, and Kings
themselves esteemed it a glory to have been
their disciples.

Let us now try to resume the thread of our discourse
where we laid it down yesterday — We were
speaking, if you recollect on the humble origin &
the gradual progress of Natl. History within these
walls —

It is sometimes not unpleasant to cast our eyes
back on the begining, or first essay of any laborious
undertaking. We told you yesterday that Nat. H. was an
entirely new department of study in this place 20 years ago.
The first 2, or 3 years were chiefly spent in the arduous labour
of breaking a new road, through an hitherto trackless region: or
to change the figure — it was removing rock & stones, clearing
the ground; breaking it up, & preparing it for seed: and when
the seed was sown, the growth was so slow, that half of what
is called "a literary life" passed away, before we obtained
an harvest worth mentioning.

Natural History being an entirely new study & no public
Lecture 1805 —

